

Telephonic Courtroom Proceedings in Department 41 may be held in a Virtual Audio Courtroom

The virtual audio courtroom may not be active if the actual courtroom is open

**When the VAC is in use, Parties and Members of the public
may appear by entering the virtual courtroom at:**

Phone: (206) 263-8114
Conference Code: 9660127#

The Court has made the following findings per *State v. Bone-Club*, 128 Wash.2d 254, 906 P.2d 325 (1995)

1. Chief Justice Debra Stephens, Governor Jay Inslee, and President Trump have declared state-wide and national emergencies due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-25 mandates that essential businesses such as the Court are prohibited from operating, unless they establish and implement social distancing and sanitation measures established by the United States Department of Labor's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 and the Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations. Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28 recognized that "there are a plethora of electronic, telephonic and other options that make it possible for the public to attend open public meetings remotely", and the Governor waived any requirement under Washington State open meetings laws which required in-person meetings. While not governing this proceeding, this proclamation demonstrates the nature and extent of the pandemic emergency.
2. With respect to Court operations, Chief Justice Stephens' General Order No. 25700-B-607 requires that all matters conducted by the Court by during this time period "must be heard by telephone, video, or other means that do not require in-person attendance, unless impossible. Where court matters must be heard in person, social distancing and other public health measures must be strictly observed." That Order further recognizes that "[n]othing in this order limits the authority of courts to adopt measures to protect health and safety that are more restrictive than this order, as circumstances warrant."
3. For purposes of the matters which are scheduled before this Court today, the Court Finds as follows:
 - a. A compelling interest has been demonstrated that requires that the Court take such measures as to conduct the hearings scheduled for today via teleconference and to limit physical public interaction with the parties and court staff.
 - b. Anyone who objects to the matter currently scheduled may dial in to the virtual courtroom and state such objection. Members of the public must remain silent unless they ask and are given permission to speak, and recording of the proceeding is prohibited without prior court approval.
 - c. The court finds that the means provided for the public to observe/listen to this court hearing is the least restrictive means available for protecting the public, the parties, and court staff.
 - d. The Court has weighed the importance of open proceedings against the present health risks, and has determined that it is appropriate to defer to the guidance of public health experts during this pandemic. The risk of further spread of COVID-19 outweigh the interests of the public to be physically present in open courts.
 - e. This order is in place for the scheduled proceedings, and will be reconsidered daily as public health data, directives, and advice are issued. This order is as narrowly tailored as possible to address the present health risks. No less restrictive alternative is available that will sufficiently protect the health of all present.

Dated: March 30, 2020



Judge Matthew Williams